

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE**

**March 2, 2011**

*Ron Angelo, Acting Commissioner  
Department of Economic and Community Development*

**HB 6412 AN ACT CONCERNING THE SMALL TOWN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM**

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Good morning Senator Casano, Representative Gentile, Senator Fasano, Representative Aman and members of the committee. My name is Ron Angelo and I am the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you to discuss DECD's support for HB 6412 *An Act Concerning the Small Town Economic Assistance Program*.

HB 6412 would allow the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) to fund multi-town projects which is consistent with the state's efforts to promote regionalism and cost sharing. Towns would be able to apply jointly for a larger project by partnering to address a mutual need. Currently, towns must submit separate applications if they are working on a joint project. This would allow one application to be submitted on behalf of multiple towns.

The savings realized through this new approach would be significant for several reasons. First, soft costs, such as architectural drawings and engineering plans would be reduced because only one contractor would need to be hired. Second, the savings from the soft costs could be redirected to fund the hard cost portion of the project.

Additionally, this would minimize the administrative burden for the towns and for the state. One application would be submitted by the towns through a lead town and one contract would be executed between the lead town and the state.

This bill seeks to maximize the ability of communities to apply for funding for regional projects, which in turn will create a greater return on an investment for the state. Allowing towns to submit proposals on a regional basis would also support the state's ongoing efforts to promote regionalism.

We are confident that allowing for multi-jurisdictional grants through STEAP will be successful and we look forward to working with the Governor and legislature on this important issue.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our comments.